

CURRENT TOPICS

M. WEYMARCK, the noted French statistician, writing in the St. James Gazette, says that the number of French citizens possessing estates exceeding £2,000,000 is under thirty, while those possessing estates over £500,000 but under £2,000,000 in value is about 100. Between 500 and 600 persons possess fortunes averaging from £200,000 to £400,000. Some 4,000 persons in France possess fortunes of between £100,000 and under £200,000. About 13,000 French citizens are "millionaires" in the French sense of the word—namely, possessing over £40,000 and up to £99,000. Going lower down the scale, it is estimated that 262,000 Frenchmen possess a capital of between £2,000 and £4,000, and 1,548,000 hold between £400 and £1,000 each.

A WISCONSIN paper published as a "problem," the following: "A banker on his way home found a ten dollar bill, took down the number of it; put it in his pocket, and went on his way rejoicing. When he reached home the butcher was there with a meat bill of ten dollars. The banker paid the butcher the ten he had found. The butcher paid the same ten to the printer and the printer to the grocer and the grocer to the banker. He noticed that it was the same bill which he had found, and at the same time noticed that it was a counterfeit. Who was the loser?"

EVIDENTLY this was no problem for the editor of the Milwaukee Wisconsin. That editor without shedding a drop of perspiration, solves the "problem" in this way: "No one was the loser, to be sure. But who was the gainer? The story does not represent the banker as insolvent, and it is to be presumed, he was not dependent upon the accident of finding the bill in the street for ability to pay his butcher. Had he paid the butcher in genuine money, the butcher would have been enabled to pay the printer, and the printer to pay the grocer, and the grocer to pay the banker, so that in that event the chain of accounts would have been liquidated just the same. Nobody was any richer for the finding of the counterfeit, for it returned to the hands of the one who had innocently placed it in circulation, and in coming to him it wiped out a claim which he held against another as large as the claim against him to satisfy which he had paid it out. Had the finder of the bill been a dishonest or irresponsible man, the counterfeit might sooner or later have wrought injury. The accident of its return to the banker, who, of course, retired it from circulation when he found out its real character, brought its career to a harmless conclusion, leaving the banker and everybody else no richer and no poorer than they would have been if the medium employed in squaring the series of accounts had been a genuine bank note. But the anecdote illustrates nothing in particular, unless it be that honest people won't cheat."

A NEW YORK paper recently printed the following news story: "Charles Rankin, who said he was one of the members of the negro cavalry regiment that saved the day at San Juan hill, was held in \$1,000 bail for trial in the Jefferson Market court on a charge of burglary. The complainant, Francis Oliver of West Thirty-second street, said Rankin pried open the door of his home with a 'jimmy' and stole \$150 worth of household goods. 'I know Roosevelt well,' Rankin said. 'I was with him that day at San Juan, and if it hadn't been for the negro troops on that occasion he wouldn't be alive today.'"

COMMENTING upon this story and writing to the Buffalo, N. Y., Times, "a soldier" says: "Now, Charles Rankin may know Roosevelt well, and he may have been with him on 'that day,' but neither he nor any other negroes could have saved Roosevelt's life on San Juan hill for two very good reasons. First, Roosevelt's life was not in danger 'that day,' and secondly, he was not in the fight at all on San Juan hill. It is astonishing to find to what extremes this myth will go. San Juan hill was assaulted and captured by Gen. Sam Hawkins and Col. Wyckoff—the latter being killed in the attack—and Mr. Roosevelt had no more to do with it than the Buffalo baseball team. Col. Bacon in his review of the military operations in Cuba, in

the August number of the Army and Navy Critic, exposes finally and for all time Roosevelt's claim to military glory from the San Juan episode. After San Juan had been captured Roosevelt decided that it was time for him to charge something, so he marched his men frantically up Kettle Hill. Kettle Hill derived its name from the fact that an old kettle was found on top of it. It was not fortified. It contained no intrenchments. It held no Spaniards. Col. Bacon says that it never had held any Spaniards, and that the American troops had passed by it without a thought of marching upon it, because there was nothing on top to march for. Roosevelt charged it purely for the benefit of his press bureau, and Col. Bacon states positively that during the engagement 'that day' Col. Roosevelt never saw a Spaniard, unless he was able to look through Kettle Hill."

NEW S has reached London of the death at Mombasa of a remarkable African native who accompanied Bishop Hannington on his ill-fated journey to Uganda. The London Telegraph says: "This is the Rev. W. H. Jones, a member of the Yao tribe, who, having been rescued in early life by a British cruiser from an Arab slave ship, was sent to Bombay. Here he learned the trade of blacksmith, and just forty years ago again set foot in Africa, where he became the first native clergyman of the East African mission. Indeed, his knowledge of the English tongue and great intelligence generally afford a striking, though not solitary, example of the high state of cultivation attainable by the African mind under the influences of civilization. Mr. Edun, who accompanied the Alake of Abeokuta to this country, was another, while, in more distant times, a third instance was furnished by the case of Ignatius Sancho, the literary negro, and the subject of one of Gainsborough's pictures. After the bishop's murder, Mr. Jones, who had been left with part of the caravan in Kairrondo, led the men the whole 500 miles back again to the coast, the guide carrying aloft the blue flag, so familiar a feature at missionary exhibitions, inscribed with the word 'Ichabod' in white characters."

IN THIS day of cures and cures, a New York dispatch to the Chicago Tribune, relating to the strangest cure of all is interesting. The Tribune's New York correspondent says: "Senor Eusebio Santos, a Spaniard living in Brooklyn, thrives on a diet of grass alone—just plain, ordinary grass, which he plucks in the park with his own hands. His only drink is water. His story is corroborated by the people with whom he lives. He himself accentuated his tale by eating about a quart of fresh grass for the 'gentlemen of the press' out of a two quart soup tureen 'Senor,' he said in Spanish, taking a mouthful of what remained in the large tureen, 'I am a Spaniard. I went to Cuba from Spain fifteen years ago. Before I was long in the island my health gave out. 'Starve yourself,' said my physician. 'Eat potatoes,' said he; 'eat potatoes.' I grew sick of potatoes. 'Then chew grass,' said the doctor; 'nice clean grass, and drink water.' So for six months my diet has been nothing but grass. Now I am in perfect physical condition. I never ail, I feel strong, and warm, and fresh, and I have forgotten what it is to have a headache."

IT IS said that Col. Prentiss Ingraham of Chicago, who recently died, has contributed to English fiction 46,000,000 words, or a daily average of more than 3,700 words during the thirty-four years that he made a living by his pen. A writer in the Chicago Tribune says: "One thousand novels or novelettes is the estimate given by the family and friends of Colonel Ingraham as his life's work. For years he wrote a novel every two or three weeks. Not all of these were published in book form, though many of them were, having first been given to the public as serials in magazines or weekly papers. Quantities of them were published under a pen name in the form of dime novels, or 'libraries.' Comparatively few were copyrighted. Reduced to the number of words, the basis on which a writer's capacity is often estimated, Colonel Ingraham's output was something like this: 600 novels, averaging 70,000 words each, 42,000,000 words; 400 novelettes, averaging 10,000

words each, 4,000,000 words; annual output, 1,353,944 words; daily output, 3,706 words; hourly output, 154.7; capacity per minute, every hour of the day for twenty-four years, 2.24 words. The foregoing does not include verses, magazine articles, newspaper sketches, and miscellaneous matter that might easily have brought up Colonel Ingraham's daily average to 4,000 words."

THE republican campaign text book for 1904 devotes several pages to what it calls "the St. Louis-Esopus episode." In this book it is said that the telegram sent by Mr. Parker to Mr. Sheehan at St. Louis, July 9, was prearranged. The Brooklyn Eagle says that it is in a position to affirm and to maintain by proof that Judge Parker wrote the famous gold telegram Saturday morning, July 9, at 11 o'clock; that he wrote the dispatch on his own initiative without consultation or communication with anyone and that the dispatch was not written and sent in pursuance of a prearrangement and that those who were devoted to the Parker cause in St. Louis had no foreknowledge of it.

AN IMPORTANT decision was rendered in the federal court at St. Louis by Judge John Rogers in the case of Lee Won Ton, a Chinaman, against whom a deportation case was brought. Judge Rogers held that Lee Won Ton could legally remain in this country. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch explains: "The decision establishes a precedent in determining the legal status of a Chinaman who changes his occupation while in this country, Judge Rogers' opinion being the first ever handed down on the subject. The Chinese exclusion act grants merchants the privilege of coming into the United States. It excludes laborers. Lee Won Tong entered the country as a merchant, and remained a merchant for several years. He then became a laborer, and the customs department sought to deport him, holding that as a laborer he had no right to enter this country and therefore had no right to remain. The Chinaman contended, and Judge Rogers' decision sustains him, that he came into the country legally, and once here, the government had not the right to deport him."

THERE is one illusion about Japan to watch a writer in the London Spectator directs attention. This writer says that the notion can not be got rid of that the island empire is but a little state which in a very short time must bleed to death. This writer adds: "It is not very easy to trace the origin of this belief, unless it be the habit of expecting great size in all Asiatic empires, or of comparing the area of Japan with that of China or of Russia itself. So compared Japan is of course, a little place, which looks on the maps almost insignificant. Compared, however, in a more sensible way with the other island empire which has so long been one of the great powers of the world, Japan is by no means small. Its total area, without counting Formosa, is by 27,000 square miles greater than that of the British isles, and as large a proportion of it is fertile and thickly populated. That population again is 44,000,000, or 3,000,000 greater than our own (1901), 6,000,000 greater than that of France, and almost equal to that of Austria-Hungary."

IF THE word "little" refers to strength for war, according to the Spectator writer, that strength is in many respects superior to the British strength. The Spectator writer explains: "We could probably destroy the Japanese fleet, but the Japanese fleet has destroyed that of Russia, and could, if allowance is made for position, maintain a contest with that of France or Germany which would not be absolutely hopeless. As regards soldiers Japan has a conscription, and the conscription obviously works. Within the last six months the country has sent out six armies, each nearly equal to either of the forces that contended at Waterloo. We thought we had done a great thing when we sent 80,000 men to India in 1857, and an extraordinary one when we transported 200,000 men to South Africa in 1900. But Japan has transported more than 400,000 men across the sea, and is now defying the Russians at Liao Yang and Port Arthur with armies great-